

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, IR

SUBJECT: RESURGENCE PARTY PREPARES FOR JUNE 20 ELECTIONS

SUMMARY: IN LATE MAY 841 CANDIDATES WERE NAMED TO CONTEST FOR 298 PARLIAMENTARY SEATS IN SINGLE PARTY ELECTIONS OF JUNE 20. ONLY ABOUT HALF OF INCUMBENTS WERE RENOMINATED. OF 299 IRAN NOVIN MEMBERS IN PREVIOUS LOWER HOUSE, OVER HALF WERE DROPPED. THERE SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN NO DISTINCT PATTERN, BUT DEPUTIES AND SENATORS FROM RURAL AND RRIBAL AREAS FARED BETTER THAN THEIR URBAN COLLEAGUES. MOST NEW CANDIDATES ARE PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE WITH LITTLE POLITICAL EXPERIENCE. SOME 4.5 MILLION IRANIANS REGISTERED TO VOTE, HAVING BEEN UNDER SOME PRESSURE TO DO SO, BUT IT IS UNLIKELY ALL OF THEM WILL VOTE. CAMPAIGNING HAS BEEN DESULTORY, WITH MOST CANDIDATES ECHOING SHAH'S COMMENTS ON SIGNIFICANCE OF RESURGENCE PARTY AND BUILDING UP THEIR OWN QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE. RESPONDING TO WIDESPREAD CYNICISM ABOUT HONESTY OF VOTING, PARTY DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL MAHDAVI DENIED ON JUNE 15 THAT GOVERNMENT FAVORED PARTICULAR CANDIDATES, YET PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAD EARLIER ISSUED STATEMENT BACKING NINE SENATORIAL CANDIDATES. UNSOPHISTICATED VOTERS MAY HAVE THEIR EXPECTATIONS FOR EXONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR REGIONS RAISED BY CAMPAIGN PROMISES. END SUMMARY

1. LISTS OF DEPUTIES AND SENATORS WHO ARE CANDIDATES FOR
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JUNE 20 ELECTION WERE PUBLISHED IN LATE MAY . EIGHT HUNDRED

FORTY-ONE NAMES WERE SELECTED OUT OF MORE THAN 6,700 PEOPLE WHO FILLED OUT FORMS VOLUNTEERING TO BE CANDIDATES. ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-FOUR DEPUTIES, OR EXACTLY HALF OF MEMBERSHIP OF LOWER HOUSE, WERE NOT RENAMED AS CANDIDATES. OF THESE, 13 WERE MEMBERS OF FORMER MARDOM PARTY(OUT OF 37) AND 121 WERE FORMER IRAN NOVINK(OUT OF 229). FAZLOLLAH SADR, SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF FORMER IRANIANS PARTY, WAS REVAMED. MINORITY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES WERE ALSO RENOMINATED. MOHSEN PAZESHKPUR, FORMERLY OF ULTRA-NATIONALISTIC PAN IRAN PARTY, WAS NAMED A CANDIDATE, HAVING BEEN OUT OF LOWER HOUSE SINCE 1971. IN SENATE, 11 OUT OF 30 WERE NOT RENAMED, AND ALL WERE FORMER IRAN NOVIN MEMBERS. ANALYSIS OF BACKGROUND OF THOSE DROPPED DOES NOT SHOW ANY CLEAR PATTERN, EXCEPT THAT PARLIAMENTARIANS REPRESENTING RURAL AND TRIBAL AREAS GENERALLY FARED BETTER THAN THOSE OF URBAN BACKGROUNDS. TWO WOMEN DEPUTIES, INCLUDING ONE VERY ACTIVE IN WOMEN'S AFFAIRS, WERE UNACCOUNTABLY DROPPED. SO WAS MAJLES FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAHMUD ZIAI.

2. LITTLE PATTERN CAN BE DISCERNED IN NEW FACES ON LIST OF CANDIDATES. THERE WAS AN ATTEMPT TO DISCOURAGE MEDICAL DOCTORS FROM BECOMING CANDIDATES, ON GROUNDS THAT THEIR SERVICES WERE NEEDED BY PEOPLE OF THEIR CONSTITUENCIES, BUT SOME WERE IN FACT APPROVED AS CANDIDATES. MANY NEW CANDIDATES ARE MIDDLE AGED OR OLDER MEMBERS OF PROFESSIONS(I.E., LAWYERS, HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, MERCHANTS) AND SOME REPRESENT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SUCH AS LABOR UNIONS AND GUILDS. TABRIZ CONSULATE REPORTS THAT YOUNGER UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS WHO VOLUNTEERED TO BECOME CANDIDATES WERE UNIFORMLY UNSUCCESSFUL. SOME IRANIANS WITH ANTI-REGIME PASTS PUT FORTH THEIR NAMES TO TEST THE WATERS AND WERE LIKEWISE TURNED DOWN.

3. GOI REGISTRATION DRIVE HAS BEEN HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL. SOME 4.5 MILLION PEOPLE OUT OF MAXIMUM OF ELEVEN MILLION POTENTIAL VOTERS AND HAVE OBTAINED REGISTRATION CARDS AND MORE WILL DO SO BEFORE REGISTRATION ENDS. IN ADDITION TO MASSIVE PUBLICITY, PRESSURE HAS BEEN EXERTED THROUGH EMPLOYERS TO INSURE THAT EVERYONE ELIGIBLE GOES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO HIS NEAREST RESURGENCE PARTY OFFICE TO REGISTER. WHEN HE DOES SO, A RUBBER STAMP TO THAT EFFECT IS PLACED IN HIS IDENTITY CARD, AND RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING THAT ABSENCE OF THIS STAMP MIGHT GIVE IRANIANS SOME DIFFICULTY IN DEALING WITH GOI BUREAUCRATS. ON THE OTHER HAND, MANY IRANIANS BELIEVE IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO VOTE, AS THERE IS NO WAY GOI OFFICIALS COULD CHECK TO SEE IF THOSE REGISTERED HAD ACTUALLY VOTED. MINISTER OF INTERIOR

AMOUZEGAR TOLD PAN AMERICAN VISITOR SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT INVIEW LARGE NUMBER OF TINY VILLAGES AND HAMLETS IN IRAN GOI WOULD BE LUCKY TO OBTAIN TOTAL OF FOUR MILLION VOTERS. SINCE THEN GOI PUBLICITY SUGGESTS THAT SLIGHTLY HIGHER TARGET HAS BEEN SET.

4. APPEARANCE OF CANDIDATES IS STANDARD FARE ON IRANIAN TELEVISION THIS WEEK. MOST SPEAKERS HAVE CONFINED THEMSELVES TO ECHOES OF SHAH'S PLANS FOR RESURGENCE PARTY, RECITATIONS OF NEEDS WHICH THEY HOPE TO FULFILL, AND LISTING OF THEIR PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND QUALIFICATIONS. EVEN GUIDED PRESS HAS COMMENTED UNFAVORABLY ON THIS HO-HUM STYLE OF CAMPAIGNING. RUMORS ARE RIFE THAT AMONG THREE TO FIVE CANDIDATES STANDING FOR EACH SEAT, GOI OFFICIALS HAVE ALREADY PICKED WINNERS, ALTHOUGH KHORRAMSHAHR CONSULATE REPORTS THAT THREE CANDIDATES IN THAT CITY ARE WAGING SUCH A DETERMINED CAMPAIGN THAT PEOPLE BELIEVE VOTING WILL BE FREE. TO CONTRACT RUMORS OF PRESELECTION, RESURGENCE PARTY DEPTY SECRETARY GENERAL (AND COMMERCE MINISTER) FEREIDUN MAHDAVI DENIED ON JUNE 15 THAT GOVERNMENT HAD ANY FAVORITE CANDIDATES. BUT ONLY TWO DAYS EARLIER, PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAD ISSUED RECOMMENDATION THAT PUBLIC VOTE FOR NINE NAMED CANDIDATES FOR SENATORIAL SEATS. ADDING TO CONFUSION, THERE ARE REPORTS THAT COALITIONS OF CANDIDATES MIGHT BE FORMED. IT APPEARED THAT LABOR UNIONISTS, ACADEMICS, OR OTHER SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS MIGHT BAND TOGETHER TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER'S CANDIDACIES AND THAT THERE MIGHT ALSO BE EXCHANGES OF SUPPORT AMONG VARIOUS INTEREST GROUPS. IT NOW APPEARS THAT EFFORTS TO FORM SUCH COALITIONS HAVE COME TO NAUGHT.

5. COMMENT: IRANIAN MAN IN STREET, NEVER ONE TO EXPECT REAL FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN ELECTIONS APPEARS BAFFLED BY EXISTENCE OF MULTIPLE CANDIDATES WITHIN SINGLE PARTY. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE GENERALLY PRESUMES OUTCOME HAS BEEN DECIDED IN ADVANCE. CNDIDATES HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY RAISED EXPECTATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CONSTITUENCIES BY MAKING GRANDIOSE CAMPAIGN PROMISES, AND UNSOPHISTICATED VOTERS MAY EXPECT ACTION IN VIEW OF FACT THAT ALL CANDIDATES ARE MEMBERS OF GOI'S SINGLE PARTY. HELMS

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